



Via Pacis

The War Prayer

by Samuel Clements

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenues gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest depths of their hearts, and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles, beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpouring of fervid eloquence which moved every listener. It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety's sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came--next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their young faces alight with martial dreams--visions of the stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender!--then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag, or, failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation--

"God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest, Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!"

Then came the "long" prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was, that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our able young soldiers, and aid, comfort, and encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them in the day of battle and the hour of peril, bear them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them to crush the foe, grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory--

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended on the preacher's side and stood there, waiting. With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal, "Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside--which the startled minister did--and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne--bearing a message from Almighty God!" The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. "He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have explained to you its import--that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of--except he pause and think.

"God's servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two--one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this--keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbor at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor's crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.

"You have heard your servant's prayer--the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it--that part which the pastor--and also you in your hearts--fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: 'Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!' That is sufficient. The whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory--must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God the Father fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!



"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle--be Thou near them! With them--in spirit--we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it--for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen."

(After a pause.) "Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits."

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.



Via Pacis

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Greetings from the Rock Co. Jail

Sam Day
John LaForge
Ron Renkoski
Mike Miles

Greetings and salutations from the Rock County Jail. The four of await trial(s) for leafletting at the 60,000 acre Fort McCoy chemical warfare training camp, in central Wisconsin. Over 8,000 national guard and reserve soldiers have already been sent to the gulf war from Ft. McCoy.

To us the ordeal of jail is less uncomfortable than cooperating with the war system. This system controls 500 billion dollars, commands the economies of whole congressional districts, and buys "protection from the courts like organized crime buys cops. It has created the "gulf crisis" to replace the cold war and to save itself from massive defunding by congress. (Iraq was a U.S. paid ally for the last 10 years.)

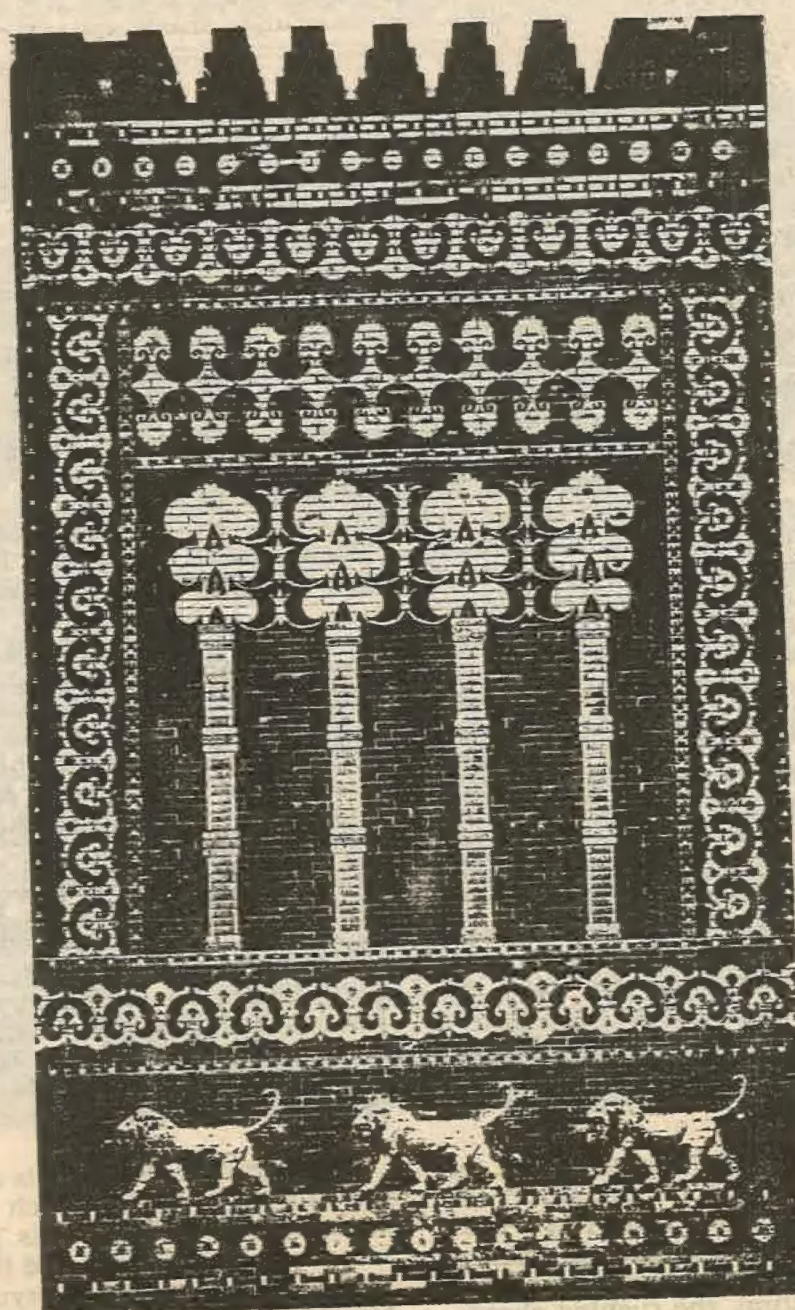
This war is not being waged to save the princes of Kuwair, but the bloated Pentagon budget and the U.S. war economy. But we will not be demoralized by this rush to war profiteering. If war is the health of the U.S. economy, then peace is its nemesis, and the forces of nonviolence must deny it their support, free of war taxes, free of war employment, free of war censorship.

By our actions we emphatically denounce this war, and although we're in jail we are inspired by and express our solidarity with all those who struggle against it: in the streets of North America, Europe, and the Mid East, in private conversation or public confrontation, as soldiers or civilians.

We are encouraged also by the news of a CBS news crew led by Bob Simon defying government censorship, by travelling into the war zone "unescorted" by the Pentagon Media Police.

We reject the notion that in order to support our soldiers we must cheer on their march to slaughter. Since they have been so cynically manipulated by the president and congress, we feel a responsibility to warn them of their duty to refuse illegal orders. Orders such as the commands to bombard civilian objects like Baghdad, a modern city of over 7 million people. No, only demanding and bringing an end to this war supports the troops.

We shudder at the specter, the horror and the glaring immorality of this most recent U.S. war of aggression. And we contend that this dreadful business of human slaughter is a crime against humanity that free people must necessarily resist.



THE HARD WORK OF FREEDOM by Barry Haglan

I should have seen it coming
Its been building to a head
Its gone from pointing fingers
To people laying dead
While the hard work of freedom
Keeps on raining down
The hard work of freedom
Means explosions all around

George of the Jungle
Desert Rat Hussein
Equally culpable
Equally insane
When the hard work of freedom
Runs right down the drain
Do you believe them
Are they really feeling pain

The Germans helped make poison gas
The French sold them fighter planes
The Soviets sold them a bill of goods
And we sold them moldy grain
The hard work of freedom
As everyone should know
Is not the quantity removed
But the amount allowed to grow

Around the House

It seems as though the Catholic Worker House is always full of new arrivals! Since my own arrival to the community in October, I have begun to get that "settled in" feeling and it is good to have a sense of familiarity with Des Moines and the community. I think Albrecht has also begun to get settled in. He had been living with Kristin and Ed Fallon until Georg left for Germany, but now he's living at Ligutti House. He helped organize a rally for peace in the Middle East that CND sponsored, and he is organizing CND's local chapter of 20/20 Vision. Albrecht just returned from a week's vacation to Chicago and Williams Bay, Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, he attended the mid-year BVS retreat, and he was able to check in with other BVSers to see how their year of service is going.

In December, shortly after the last Via Pacis came out, we experienced the long awaited arrival of Jordan Dawson. Carla, Joshua, and the new baby headed off to Father Frank's for a short vacation. Frank's house in Logan appears to be a good vacationing spot when people need a break from the house. Norman leaves tomorrow to go to Logan for a visit. As soon as Carla returned from Logan in December she was ready to get back into house activities: taking shifts at the house and keeping track of things at Lazarus House too. Both Joshua and Julius seemed to take to their new brother immediately, with Joshua calling out "baby...baby" and Julius taking on some of the responsibility of being a "big brother." Jordan is getting close to being 2 months old now, and I can already see a difference in how he responds to everything around him.

Along with Jordan's birth in December, Mark Rogness joined our community after living at the Moorhead Catholic Worker House/Farm. I think it took him a while to adjust to living in Des Moines again after several years at a farm. Right away, he took on some of our much needed household repairs: better insulation over the windows and doors to keep the cold out, working on numerous washers and dryers, and constant attention to the food pantry.

Just recently, Bob Roberts came to stay with us. He often comes to the Des Moines Catholic Worker on his trips between various Catholic Worker houses, and it's good to have him around. Today Bob commented that it was a very "February day" because of the grey atmosphere and the bleached out look that everything has. A week ago we might have thought that spring was, but there's been no such luck.

Carol has been talking about spring, and she seems eager to get plants for our garden started inside soon. Kay says that Chinese cabbage can be planted in late March, so we will have fresh vegetables before we know it. I'm glad to have Carol and Kay around to talk to about plants and herbs and other things that I know little about. The other night Kay gave me good advice on how to wash wool without shrinking it too badly.

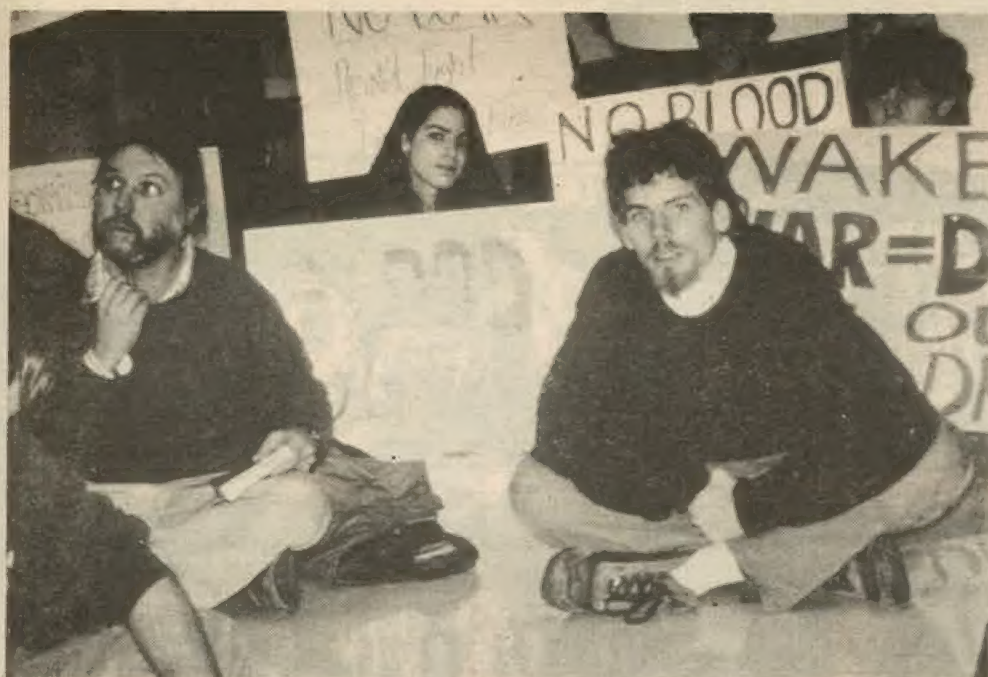
As usual we continue to work in the peace community, and like many others, I find myself preoccupied with the war in the Middle East. On January 15, the day set as the U.N. deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, Brian Terrell (from the Catholic Worker Farm in Maloy), Kay, and myself decided to go to the Iowa State Legislature to

express our concern over the situation in the Persian Gulf. We hung a banner that read NO GULF WAR, NO DEATH PENALTY and shouted "Thou shalt not kill" during Governor Branstad's Condition of the State address. We were not arrested but instead asked to leave the building, and we would be notified if any charges were filed.

After the bombing began a day later, we organized an action at the army recruiting center in the Federal Building. Four community members, Mark, Corey, Carla, and myself, were arrested, along with eight others, while Kay and Carol provided great support and media contact for all of us.

We've also been supporting Corey as he deals with the legal system, facing charges from the action at the Tauke campaign/Bush speech in October. He awaits sentencing at the end of the month after a six-person jury found him guilty of disorderly conduct this week. It amazes me to see the legal system in a completely different way and to see how Corey has handled the experience of having a jury trial. Corey has also been participating in People for Middle East Peace, a local group formed through American Friends Service Committee and Iowa Peace Network. I am also amused and interested by Corey's daily account of the Pentagon briefing and all the other news stories that he keeps a close eye on.

Through all my struggle to realize that the war in the Middle East is continuing, and an end to it does not seem near, it is also relieving to see that daily life at the house continues. I'm reminded of the continuance of daily life by the kids...today as I was typing up some of the articles for the newspaper, Kary and Jann brought Valentine's Day cards to me.



HAPPY EIGHTIETH
BIRTHDAY TO OUR
GOOD FRIEND HELEN
TICHY!

Our Needs

Tomato products
Cheese
Fresh fruit and
Vegetables
Cooking oil
Juice

Shampoo
Sanitary napkins and
Tampons

Hide-a-bed

As our Christmas surplus runs thin, please remember that with Spring comes our property taxes, and that we will still need money as always.

Mass Schedule

March 1, 7:30pm
March 15, 7:30pm
April 5, 7:30pm
April 12, 7:30pm
May 17, 7:30pm

Thank You

Thank you to all those who contribute to our community in various ways:

St. Anthony's school for the 500 rolls

Simpson College

Mr. Diggins, who brings fresh eggs

Grinnell students

All the churches that bring meals to us

Alyson and Margaret, who come to play with the kids

War is Blasphemy

by Father Frank Cordaro

A T.V. WAR: Like most everyone else, the war in the Middle East has been very much a part of my everyday existence. Along with millions of other passive participants, I am experiencing this war from the safety of my living room sofa via T.V. news and CNN. For us "living room spectators", the war is a series of T.V. images in which we are given the big picture through computer wizardry, colored charts and graphs, and a mountain of statistical analyses. For Americans, it is a war of instant communication. When Iraq's missiles hit Israel, I am there instantly, with millions of other Americans, watching our Patriot missiles knock down the dreaded Scud missiles of our enemies. Who has not been impressed by our military hardware and the "miracles" of high technology? I was awestruck by the videotaped pictures taken from a camera mounted on the tip of a cruise missile zeroing in on its target from hundreds of miles away. It not only hit its mark, it went through the target's front door! Little wonder we are being told that our bombs are smart bombs which hit only military targets and not innocent people. It seems our bombs are far more humane than those of our enemies which have landed in Israel and Saudi Arabia.

"THE FIRST CASUALTY OF WAR IS TRUTH": It's all a lie, this T.V. war. I do not believe it for one minute. The truth of the war cannot be found on any T.V. program. The truth of this war is being experienced first-hand by the people most directly affected by its death and destruction. I do not trust the censored information and the packaged propaganda from our Government. Not every bomb we've delivered is a "smart" bomb. The 17,000 sorties flown over Iraq and Kuwait by the Allied Air Forces, with their 80% efficiency ratings, are hitting more than just military targets. At this very moment, our bombs are killing and destroying human lives in great numbers in Iraq and Kuwait--far away from our T.V. cameras.

Wars are won by the side that kills, and destroys, the most. That is the nature of war. President Bush would have never gotten us into this war unless he was absolutely sure we could kill, and destroy, more of our enemies than our enemies could kill, and destroy, of us. The bulk of this war is being shouldered by the people in Iraq and Kuwait. If, and when, a ground war is initiated, the death toll on both sides will mount; yet the bulk of the casualties will be borne by our enemies. This is how wars are won, and President Bush intends to win this war.

WAR IS BLASPHEMY: War is obscene. It is a sin against humanity, and a blasphemy before God. The greater the war, the greater the obscenity, the sin, and the blasphemy. In each and every war fought in this century, the death and destruction brought on by the war far out-weighed the initial wrongs that caused it in the first place. Each of these wars left in their wake the seeds for future wars. This one will be no different. For this reason, I fear winning this war as much as I fear losing it.

THIS WAR MUST BE STOPPED! This war must be stopped. It is a tragic and senseless mistake. It will bring us no closer to the lasting peace, and just settlement, we seek for the Middle East. In all likelihood, this war will put us further away from settling the long standing injustices in the region. There is hypocrisy on all sides. The continued fighting, with its death and destruction, only serves to obscure the truth. It must be stopped.

My spirit is saddened by this war. God must be weeping at the sight of His chosen people--the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims--fighting each other in the very lands where He chose to reveal Himself. Unlike the six-week war we were

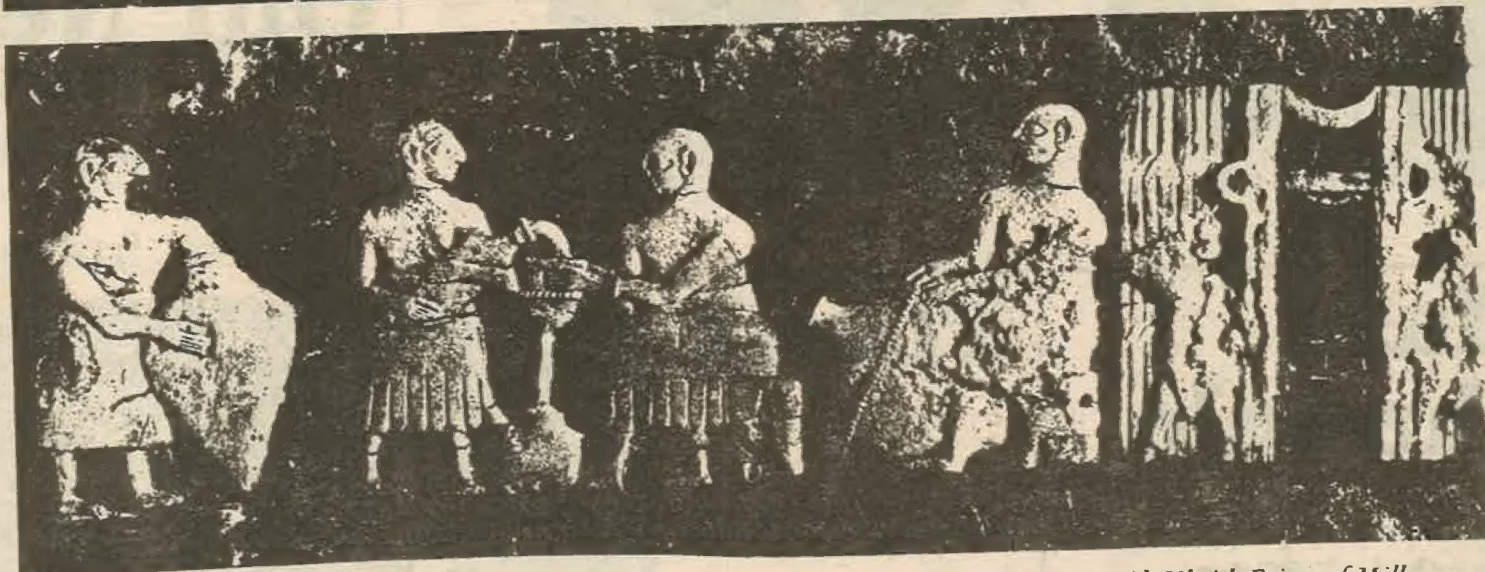
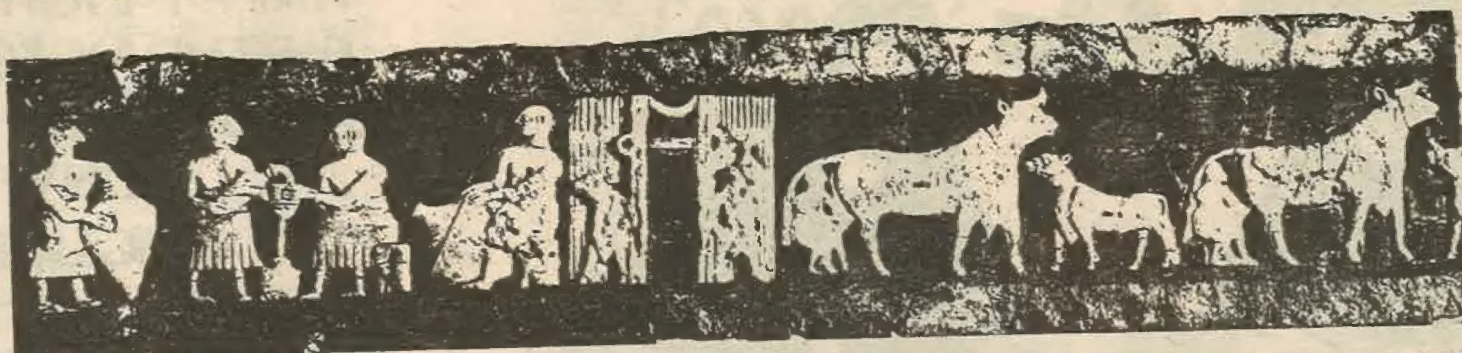
promised, we are now being told to expect much longer war. One lasting several months or maybe even a year long! As sure as I am of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am sure God wants this war to stop and He wants us to stop it.

BRINGING THE WAR HOME: We will need to do the very thing the war planners don't want us to do--bring the war home through a massive, non-violent anti-war movement. As the continued killing and destruction obscures the truth, more and more of us must move out of our living rooms and into the streets. We must demand that this war be stopped.

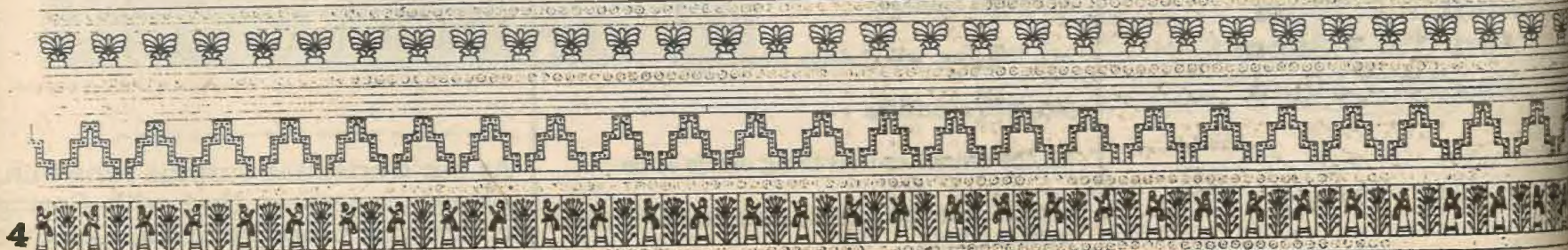
I wish it did not need to be so. I wish I was not so drawn to act for peace. I had every intention of enjoying my re-entry into parish life after being released from prison last November. I wanted to "lay low" for several months. I wanted to let the good life of Harrison County renew and refresh me before I took on any new peace and justice efforts. This war has interrupted that timetable. I see myself, in the weeks and months ahead, devoting more and more of my time and energy to the anti-war effort. After 10 years of Peace Activism, I can do no less. Always, I will keep you posted of my efforts.

Let us all continue to pray for peace regardless of our positions on the war. Knowing, in faith, that prayer may well be the most important thing we can do at this time.

God Bless,
Father Frank



Al 'Ubad. Frieze of Milkers,
Temple. Baghdad, Iraq Museum



My Two Buckets

I have been thinking lately about the time on the farm when the water pipes had rusted out and we began bringing all our water up to the house in buckets from a hand pump that was at the bottom of a hill about 1/2 a block from the house. I jumped into this new lifestyle with all the idealistic enthusiasm of a 27 year old; it was the right way to live, it was environmentally correct, it seemed right in every way and the water was the purest, freshest water I had ever tasted.

Well, I kept carrying water for years. Sometimes, I would get frustrated, there was so much work to be done, dishes to wash, diapers, the kids needing baths. More than once, I would find myself half the way up the hill with my two buckets of water knowing it wasn't enough, and dreaming of a hot bathtub filled all the way to my neck.

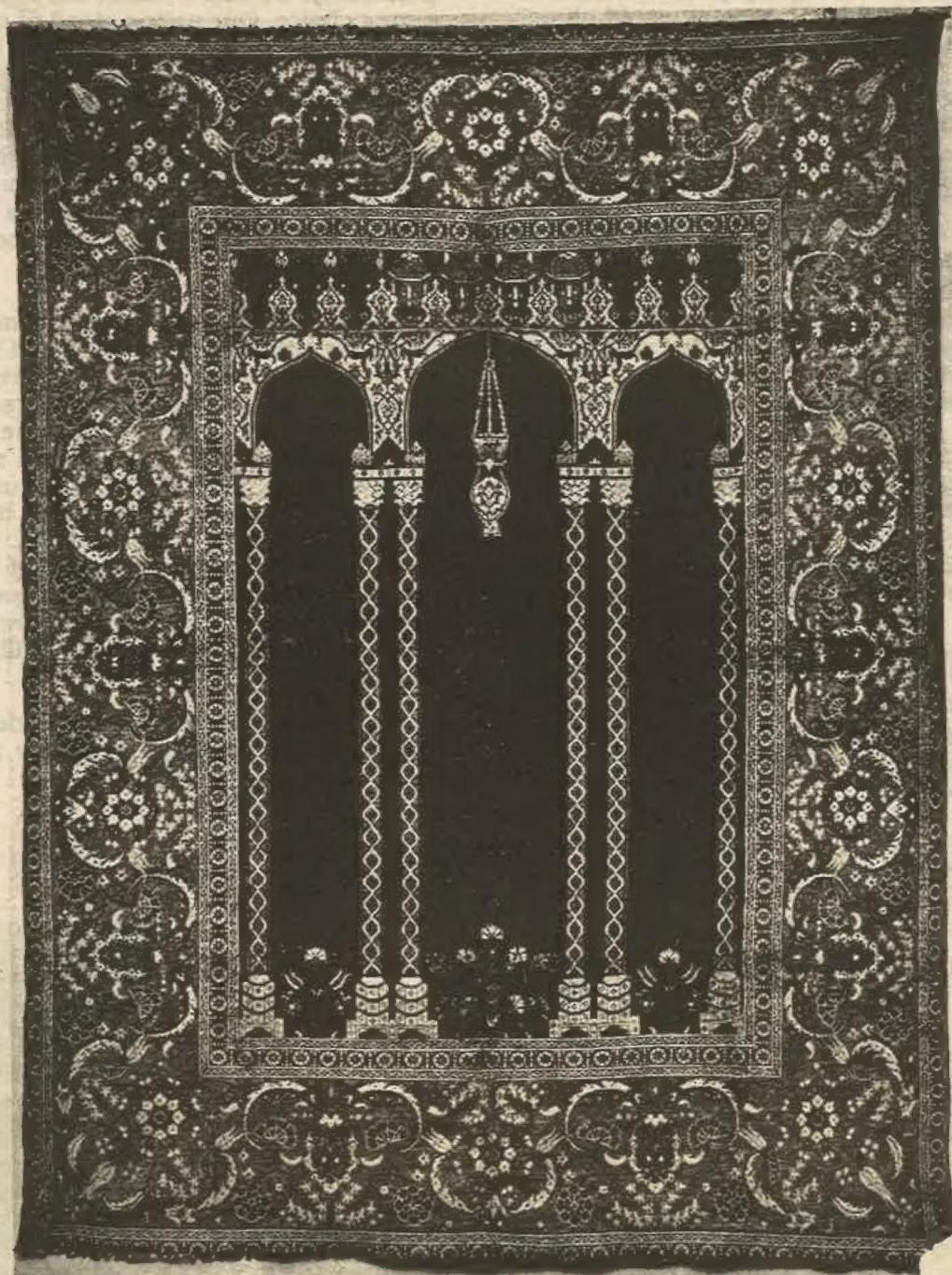
I kept carrying water though, because it was right, because the view on the way to the pump was so beautiful, I learned to know when the moon would make its changes, and which birds would be there to talk to me through all the seasons. I kept carrying water because it was the purest tasting, freshest water I had ever had.

I have been thinking about all those years carrying water lately, because it is the same story as my years of working for peace and justice. And when I found myself looking at this war, I also found myself looking at my two buckets of efforts, half the way up the hill, and dreaming of another news story that wouldn't be about bombs and military occupation.

Working for peace is not a thing that is only done in times of war, it is the truth and right that should be a part of everyone's life. Working for peace, and looking for justice strengthens and beautifies a person's life immeasurably, it is the purest, freshest drink. War shows us how much work there is to be done, and how important it is to keep up the work consistently, for life.

by Kay Meyer

الذي يبعث الأيمان في سواهم



A Child Asks: Why Do We Kill People?

by Carla Dawson

I've been thinking a lot lately about the war. I was arrested at the Federal Building. I went with a bus caravan to Washington D.C. While I was there I heard many things that had been going on in my mind. One man's statement really hit home. He said, "I have two teenage boys, and I didn't raise them to come home in body bags." That really hit me because I also have boys. Three, not two, but it is also true. I'm not raising them to come home in body bags. My oldest boy Julius asked me, "Will I have to go to war?" I told him no. I wish all parents felt as I do. Julius also said, "Mom, war is bad because they kill people. And God said killing is bad." It's amazing that a six year old knows war is bad, but grown men think it's acceptable. War is not acceptable. I have a button that says, "WHY DO WE KILL PEOPLE WHO KILL PEOPLE TO SHOW PEOPLE THAT KILLING PEOPLE IS WRONG?" I pray for the war to be over and the soldiers to come home safely. And I hope people will learn from this war what they haven't learned from other wars. No one wins a war.

Just War II

Last issue I had an article called "Just War" about the tenets of just war theology and the implications of a war with Iraq. Although biased by my pacifism, I felt that sane reasonable Christians would all agree on the principle that war must be a last resort. Let me expand a little on why not waiting until war is the last resort is a lack of faith.

We must have enough faith to do what is right. We must believe that if we distribute a few loaves and fishes with the right attitude of faith that God will supply the rest. If we feel called to be geopolitical Christians (as a nation) and attempt to sit in judgement of other nations via the U.N. - we should not feel that we have to worry about everything that could theoretically go wrong in the next years via Saddam Hussein, we merely had to keep up the sanctions and trust the rest to God. We put our faith instead in false gods of war.

This idolatry will be paid for with interest for decades to come. Let no one doubt that God will judge us as a nation harshly for this ludicrous, immoral, unjust war. God does not enjoy judging harshly - but our setting ourselves up as the master judge of nations, and not doing so with a spirit of some tolerance and patience, is reprehensible.

Both nations and individuals are sometimes offered a clear choice between good and evil. I can remember times, personally, when I've made the right or the wrong choice. Our nation stood at a turning point that was graciously offered to us by our creator, a miraculous blessing of hope and grace for the entire world. We chose the wrong path when we started the most intense air war that the world has ever seen. George Herbert Walker Bush is taking an all too willing nation down a road to destruction. It is, however, not too late for us to turn back.

No war has ever been won from the air. When we start to engage our Iraqi brothers on the ground things will even up very soon. Our tanks and personnel carriers are not designed to perform well in the desert. Although Saddam Hussein might not have the capability or the desire to use Scud missiles to deliver chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, we will probably see them in the hail of artillery when the ground war starts. Will we sink to using morally reprehensible and illegal weapons of mass destruction? Will we sink to Saddam's level?

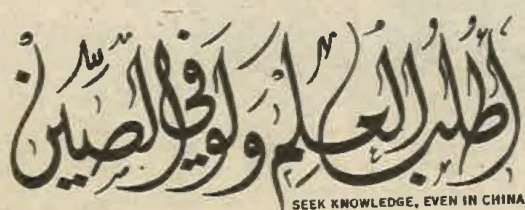
This war could go on for decades, while the problems facing our country and our planet are coming due each year.

The epidemic of homelessness will become a pandemic here. Our basic civil liberties will be curtailed while the world's second largest polluter, the United States military, will set all new standards in global pollution. The number of refugees worldwide is skyrocketing. Famine is starting to hit Africa like a vise. This war could very likely end up creating global catastrophes the likes of which have not been seen since the last ice age.

I tell you once, I tell you twice, I tell you three times that it is true: our preachers, sisters and brothers in the military will not return from the Middle Eastern quagmire until we the people demand vociferously, and in no uncertain terms, that the government return them. The foul lies by our president that this will be a short, relatively bloodless war are already starting to fall apart - we will be bogged down in the Middle East until we cut it off, run as we did from Vietnam.

As I said earlier, it is not too late. Immediate ceasefire and the return of hundreds of thousands of troops is our solution. This need not affect the blockade and economic sanctions. Let us put our trust in God and not in military solutions or weapons of mass destruction.

by Mark Rogness



Announcement

Concerned citizens statewide are presently organizing a non-violent direct action against the U.S. led war in the Persian Gulf for Monday, March 18th in the Des Moines area. Call us at 243-0765 or write us at P.O. Box 4551 Des Moines, IA 50306 for more information.

People for Middle East Peace hosts a monthly vigil for peace on the 16th of every month at 5:00pm at the Federal Building in Des Moines, 210 Walnut St.



Norman's Whereabouts



by Norman Searah

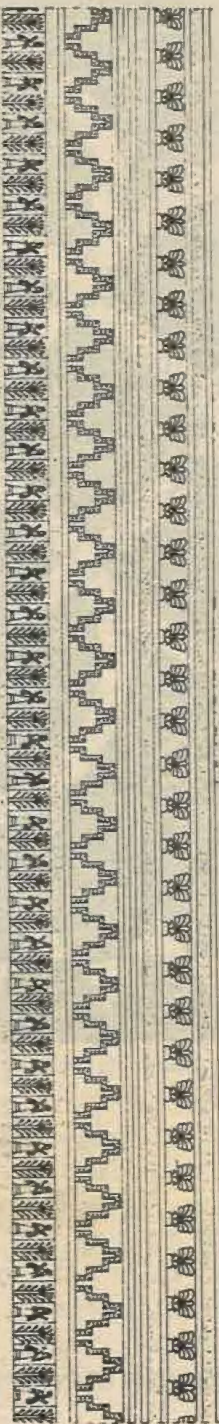
Peace, war, war, peace. Anti-war, Pro-war. Don't support the war, Support the war. It's a war, no it's a crusade. Yellow ribbons, green ribbons, red, white, and blue ribbons and buttons. No blood for oil, no oil for blood. Iraq is another Vietnam, Iraq isn't another Vietnam.

I could go on with the pros and cons, for and against the war. I find myself hurt because there isn't much that I can do and I see things not being done to stop this war in the Persian Gulf. It's good going to protest rallies and marches against the United States sending troops to the war and watching people get arrested in front of the White House. I find myself asking why not protest in front of the German embassy for their part in supplying Iraq with deadly weapons that might or will be used against an enemy using just tanks, bombs, and bullets and not nuclear weapons. Why not protest against the Russian embassy for having military people in Iraq teaching Iraqis about improving their war acts. Why not protest against the Israeli embassy for the way Israel is treating Palestinians who themselves are looking for a country they can call home. I recall in high school I read how the United States, along with the United Nations, helped Israel and how ever since then Israel has been at war with the Palestinians.

I believe that it's about time that Israel, Israel's neighboring countries, the United States, and the United Nations help the Palestinians find a country that they can call home. Along with that the Palestinians should have a right to worship in Israel as much as us Americans when we make pilgrimages to the Holy Places, like Jesus' birth place and the tomb where Jesus rose from the dead. To me what is happening in the Mid-East somewhat shows me what happens when a country goes into debt with itself and its leader builds shrines after him or herself.

Somewhat like a man who spends all his money on things to make him look big and powerful to his friend and then he robs a man who is a little weaker in order to make up for what he spent. Not only does he rob but he also destroys things which aren't his own. In order for him to get what he wanted he uses people and destroys his friends and relatives. He's a person who if he couldn't have what he wanted, no one could. So he destroys it. For some strange reason this person to me is Saddam Hussein. Other people have compared Saddam to Hitler because of all the unspeakable things he has done.

Recently I've been somewhat wishing that I could talk to Iraq and talk to Saddam Hussein somewhat like Saint Francis of Assisi did in his days when men used swords, bows, and arrows in the Crusades to kill each other. Francis sailed from Italy to the Holy Land to the Sultan of Babylonia and talked to him. I don't remember the whole story but I feel that it would be better than doing something and not really having any real results in ending the war. Like everyone, I want peace. With this war, I see that the number one gross product from any nation isn't food, tractors, or things that improve people's way of living. No the biggest thing that other nations will sell or buy from other nations is war stuff. War stuff. Why, look at a map of the world. Put yourself on that map along with everyone that you know. Now fill it with a lot of people and what you get is Home. Why are we allowing ourselves to kill ourselves? Why are we allowing Saddam Hussein to kill ourselves? Why are we allowing ourselves to destroy our Home? Why are we so greedy, so power hungry? I have no answers. Just questions, prayers, and my own little actions against both sides or all sides of the war. If you have time, sometime pray for peace.



The art used in this issue of Via Pacis is a collection of Mesopotamian, Babylonian, and some Saudi Arabian art, some of which is housed in the Iraqi Museum of Art in Bagdad.

SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS

A starched flag flying proud
on his car antenna,
University of Iowa
personalized auto license plates,
he coldly drops off his passenger
in front of our house.

A poor tired women renting her body.

I support her as I do the troops
renting their bodies
to cold old white men.

May we all come home
to lives with value.

Via Pacis

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